

concerns and has received inadequate medical care.

This is a familiar sounding story, but one thing is clear: The Russian dictatorship is terrified of Alexei Navalny. He is a threat to them because he has exposed their unbridled corruption and urged voters to demand that the government respect their rights. Because of that, Alexei Navalny's life is in danger at this very moment.

The tens of thousands of demonstrators who turned out across Russia to support this jailed opposition leader send an unmistakable message to the Kremlin: You cannot suppress the voice of the people indefinitely.

Freedom-loving Americans and freedom-loving people around the world are, today, crying out for justice for Alexei Navalny. He endures the suffering of many before him—in Russia, people like Sergei Magnitsky and Boris Nemtsov and, abroad, people like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi—whose legacies and movements did not rot while they were in prison but, instead, helped to bring down oppressive governments.

At this point, I yield to the Senator from Colorado for a brief intervention before I close with a thought or two.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I rise on behalf of Senator CARDIN, who is a Democrat from the State of Maryland and an original cosponsor of this bill with Senator WICKER, to say what he would have said if he had been here today, which is that Alexei Navalny is a Russian patriot, that he is a prisoner of conscience, and that we need to stand up to Russia's human rights violations.

Thank you.

Mr. WICKER. In reclaiming my time, I appreciate the work of my friend Senator CARDIN.

Senator COONS from Delaware was also here, but, unfortunately, he had to leave.

They also wanted to make it clear that, on a bipartisan basis, on both sides of the aisle, the U.S. Senate stands for freedom-loving people in Russia and for their spokesman, Alexei Navalny. We intend to shine the light of public opinion on the actions of the Russian kleptocracy and dictatorship with regard to prisoners and patriots like Alexei Navalny.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CONFIRMATION OF ADEWALE O. ADEYEMO

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, before we hear from Senator BOOKER and Senator BENNET and Senator WARNOCK on one of the best things this Senate has done in my career, that being the extension of the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, I just want to say a few words about someone we just voted on at the Department of the Treasury who is so, so important, Adewale Adeyemo, who will be Janet

Yellen's—one exemplary Treasury Secretary—Chief of Staff. He is a terrific public servant.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO, the Presiding Officer, and I were talking a few minutes ago about the importance of the Treasury Department in so many things from the child tax credit, to the pension bill, to so many things that we do that matter—getting the \$1,400 checks out and making sure our tax system is fair.

Senator BENNET and I serve together with Senator CORTEZ MASTO and others on the Committee on Finance. What that means and what we are trying to do on that committee is to take away the 50-percent-off coupon from corporations that shut down production in Reno or in Boulder or in Cleveland or in Newark and move overseas. They get, essentially, a 50-percent-off coupon on their taxes. We need to close those loopholes. We need a Treasury Secretary, and we need Adewale Adeyemo, who will make a huge difference in our work there.

So I thank Senator SCHUMER and those on both sides of the aisle for finally confirming him today and getting him to work.

I yield to Senator BENNET, who, I think, is going to start or, maybe, Senator BOOKER.

Less than 2 weeks ago, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law. He ushered in some of the most transformative economic policies to come out of Washington in generations.

By expanding access to and eligibility for the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, the American Rescue Plan is going to lift 10 million kids above or closer to the poverty line and put money in the pockets of 17 million American workers across the country.

I want to start out by noting that both the income—low-income and middle-income families and workers potentially qualify for these credits, and they will be issued periodically via check and direct deposit. American workers should know this was a profound change that will benefit you.

American workers also have to know that they won't have to wait until next year. You won't have to start to see advanced payments of these credits 6, 7, 10 months down—you will see them as early as July. And because of the changes that we made, if you didn't previously qualify because you didn't have a high enough income, you could be eligible now.

I am so proud to be here today alongside Senator BROWN, Senator BENNET, Senator WARNOCK, the Presiding Officer, who are in large part responsible for this powerful lifeline to the American people and, critically, for our children.

Senator BENNET, Senator BROWN, Senator WARNOCK, thank you. You are champions who have been fighting in and out of the Senate and understand not just the economic urgency but the

moral urgency to address poverty. And that is really what we are all here to talk about—the urgency of the crisis of poverty and specifically child poverty.

In America, this is unacceptable. In the wealthiest Nation on the planet Earth, the question of poverty is not one of inevitability; it is one of policy choice. It is not if we can do something; it is will we do something.

Tonight, I am going home to Newark, driving very soon, where I have lived over the past 20 years. I am proud to call Newark home. I am proud to be a part of a community of people who take care of each other. I am proud to be part of a community that is rich with dignity, rich with activism and intellect and engagement.

But we are also a community, like so many others in America, that still struggles. According to the last census, the median income for the census track that I live in was about \$14,000 per household, and that was before the dual public health and economic crises of the COVID pandemic.

And in my community, like many others, urban and rural, across America, adults aren't the only ones struggling; our kids are too. In fact, the poorest age group in America is our children, with one in six American kids living in poverty. It is nothing less than a moral obscenity that the richest Nation in the world should have the highest rates of child poverty in the developed world.

For adults, poverty has a technical definition. It is a federally defined guideline—an amount of annual income that you fall under that also takes into account how many people are in your household.

For kids, poverty is defined by what they experience every single day, by what happens to them. It is growing up being more likely to deal with food insecurity, not knowing where your next meal will come from or when it will come. It is facing housing insecurity. A quarter of kids living in poverty will have gone through an eviction before they turn 15 years old.

Kids in poverty have worse health outcomes, worse educational outcomes, and are more likely to become entrapped in our broken criminal justice system. And kids who grow up in poverty are more likely to be poor as adults.

Study after study has shown how children who live in poverty have higher levels of stress hormones. The stress of poverty literally affects their brains. It inhibits brain development. It is violence against the brain of a child.

One child poverty expert described the stress hormones that are constantly released in kids growing up in poverty as similar to the feeling that an adult would get after a car crash—every single day. This is violence.

We know that when a child experiences poverty, there are lifelong psychological and physiological effects they carry with them. Study after study after study has borne this out.

For kids, poverty is literally dangerous for their development, dangerous for their health, and they could have permanent and lasting damage to their brains.

The cruelty of this crisis is that no parent would ever choose that for their child. Poor parents do not choose for their kids to experience the daily trauma of poverty. They do not choose to condemn their kids to a life of worse education outcomes, worse health outcomes.

What we must understand is that child poverty is not a choice that low-income parents make. It is a failure of our country to take collective responsibility for the well-being of American children. This is a moral sin. It is not a sin to be poor but a sin to tolerate such poverty in our communities.

Almost 2 weeks ago, Congress and President Biden made the choice to do something about this American sin, this unacceptable reality, this moral obscenity—the violence happening to so many children. They did something about it; we did something about it in the American Rescue Plan. And now we are calling on our—really, we are on our way for a year to cut child poverty in half; for Black children more than in half, 52 percent; for Hispanic children, by 45 percent; for Native American children, by 62 percent.

That is millions of kids across the country who will not face the violence of poverty. In New Jersey, that is 89,000 kids and their families who are not just going to be lifted out of poverty but will be given the opportunities and the freedoms that come with being able to build a life and a future beyond without the trauma that comes with poverty.

That is why we are together here this afternoon—because lifting kids out of poverty is not just about ending a crisis but about beginning a new American tradition of giving every child what every child should have in America as a birthright. It is about creating freedom and liberty from the oppression of poverty. We have the power to do this. We have the tools to do it, and we know it makes good economic sense to get kids and adults out of poverty.

I love what James Baldwin wrote. He said: “Anyone who has ever struggled with poverty knows how . . . expensive it is to be poor.” Well, that is also true for our country. Whether we realize it or not, child poverty is expensive for all of us, costing our country \$1.1 trillion every year. But investing in ending poverty benefits us all. Every dollar spent on combating child poverty saves this Nation \$7 down the road; \$1 invested saves us \$7 later. Other countries, our peers, have made these kinds of investments in children and families and have reaped rewards that we are denying ourselves.

Expanding the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit and making them permanent are proven, data-driven, evidence-based, result-apparent ways to respond to some of the most

morally and economically urgent challenges of the United States of America. These are the kinds of investments in our people that will change life trajectories and have a ripple effect for generations yet to come.

If you give the child—a child firmer ground on which to grow, they will blossom and reap a harvest beyond our imagination. But if you punish them in the trauma, in the violence of poverty, you decimate not just their destinies but all of our destinies.

I am so grateful to have champions that are here today alongside me in this effort, and, together, I know this is a crisis we are going to meet, and this crisis we can overcome. I am proud of the work we have done. Now we should make those changes to the earned income tax credit and the child tax credit permanent.

I am proud to pass the microphone and the moment on to a great champion of the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, one of the original authors of the legislation that was pulled from for our recovery plan, and that is the Senator from Ohio, SHERROD BROWN.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK.) The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, thanks to Senator BOOKER. I will be very brief. I want to hear from Senator BENNET, and I know that the Presiding Officer is going to switch chairs and be out here speaking on this.

I am so appreciative of the Presiding Officer, who won his election just in—on January 5. He was declared the winner—I don’t know. Georgia elections are a little different from those of us from other places, and as soon as he was named the winner of that election, he came here and has been in the Senate about 6 or 7 weeks now and is already a leader on this fight that Senator BOOKER talked about in the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.

I have been here long enough to remember when the earned income tax credit was—people just didn’t know much about it, including our constituents.

I used to, when I was a Member of the House, I would ask accountants—CPAs and public accountants—to volunteer their time a couple of Saturdays a month for the 2 or 3 months before April 15. They would volunteer their time, and we encouraged people to sign up for the earned income tax credit, and people making \$20,000 or \$25,000 a year with kids would often get \$2,000 or \$3,000 in a tax refund, in real dollars back, because they benefited from the earned income tax credit.

So what Senator BENNET and I have worked on for a number of years is to continue to expand the earned income tax credit and now a big expansion of the child tax credit. Senator BENNET has led on that issue, on that expansion, and we worked together with Senator BOOKER and now Senator WARNOCK to make a huge difference.

When I voted from this chair on January—I am sorry, on March 6, we had been in session all night. We had voted time after time after time. It was a partisan vote.

I mean, partisanship is not what Senator MCCONNELL and my Republican colleagues say it is. Something that is partisan or nonpartisan is what the voters think, and the voters overwhelmingly support the earned income tax credit, the child tax credit, and the whole American Rescue Plan Act, and it will make such a huge difference in peoples’ lives.

But I remember after that vote—it was 1 o’clock in the afternoon. I was walking out of the building to drive back to Ohio. I drive every week or a young man drives with me every week back home. And a reporter stopped me and said: What do you think? I said: This is the best day of my political life because we—what we did, as CORY BOOKER said, we are cutting the child poverty rate in half.

In my State—and I don’t think Colorado or Georgia is much different. In my State, 92 percent of children in my State—92 percent of children will benefit from the child tax credit and their families often also benefit from the earned income tax credit. What is not to love about that?

That is why, like, 40 Democratic Senators are signing a letter to the President of the United States, asking—we have done this for a year, this expansion to the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit. We should do it permanently, and that is what—that is the mission that the four of us Senators sitting in this room have, is to make sure this is permanent because we know there will likely be good economic growth next quarter, the quarter after, in large part, because of what we have done with this rescue act. There will be strong economic growth, but I want to make sure that growth is shared by people at the bottom.

And it so often isn’t. We have seen for 20 years—30 years we have seen executive compensation explode upward. We have seen profits up. We have seen worker productivity is up, but workers’ wages are flat. That is why, in the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, we are working so hard to make sure that we provide more housing for people so that people have safe, affordable, accessible housing in this country because, too often, they don’t. That committee is called the Senate Banking Committee around here. It is officially Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, but for years it is all about banking and Wall Street and very little about housing and urban affairs. We are changing that. We are changing that, in part, because this body, under Senator BENNET’s leadership and others—this body is actually going to do the right thing, as CORY BOOKER said, and make sure that America’s children have greater opportunities than they have had in the past. That is why I am thrilled to be a part of this effort.

I yield to my friend from Colorado, Senator BENNET.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, thank you very much for being a part of this effort, and I want to thank my colleague from Ohio for his extraordinary leadership from the very beginning on both of these bills. He led on the EITC bill, and I was very grateful to have the chance to be with him on that, and I on the child tax credit, and he was my partner from the very beginning on that, as was Senator BOOKER and Senator HARRIS, before she became Vice President HARRIS.

I have only been here for 11 years, Mr. President, and you have been here a shorter time than that, and I never thought this day would come. I never thought we would see this day.

Before I came to the Senate, I was the superintendent of the Denver Public Schools. That is a large urban district in Colorado. Most of the kids are kids of color and most of the kids are kids living in poverty, and parents are working two and three jobs, many of them. No matter what they do, they can't get their kids out of poverty. No matter what they do, no matter how hard they work, they are not paid enough to get their kids out of poverty.

Over the last 11 years, I have had the great privilege of traveling the State of Colorado, and it is a diverse State. Politically, it is a diverse State. We have urban areas and rural areas, and we have got some of the most dynamic economies and business environments in the country, and therefore on the planet. And yet, if I had to summarize those townhalls, it is really easy. It is people who are coming and saying: MICHAEL, we are working really hard, but no matter what we do we can't afford housing, healthcare, higher education or early childhood education. We can't save. We think our kids are going to live a more diminished life than the life that we would, and we are already living less of a good life than our parents did.

And that is the anecdotal reflection of an economy that, for the last 50 years, has worked really well for the top 10 percent of Americans but has not worked for the bottom 90 percent. The bottom 90 percent is all of America, and their wages have been flat. We have seen income inequality grow through two recessions, the great recession and now the COVID recession, and the gaps between more affluent families and poorer families have only grown as a result.

And everywhere I went this year—I went to all 64 counties of Colorado during COVID—I heard the same thing: Give us a little bit of hope.

That is what the American Rescue Plan is going to do. It is going to give people just a little bit of hope, make it a little bit easier for people to buy groceries for their families or to pay the rent at the end of the month, pay their mortgage, set up a savings fund for their kids' college education.

That might sound like an obvious thing for us to want to do, but Washington, for years, has done exactly the opposite of what we are doing in this plan. Washington has passed one regressive tax cut after another saying they were cutting taxes for the middle class. That was a complete smoke-screen. Since 2000, they have cut—listen to this—\$5 trillion of taxes. Almost all of that has gone to the wealthiest people in the country, when we have got the worst income inequality that we have had since 1928. It doesn't make any sense.

Can you imagine if the mayor of Atlanta went to his citizens and said: We are going to borrow a bunch of money from the Chinese. We are going to borrow more money than we ever have before. And you say: Well, that kind of worries me. What are you going to use that money for? Are you building infrastructure and roads and bridges? No. Are you going to invest in our schools? No. Our sewers? No. Mental health, something we need desperately across this country? No. Healthcare? No.

What are you doing with the money? You are borrowing \$5 trillion, what are you doing with the money?

We are going to give it to the two wealthiest neighborhoods in Atlanta and hope that somehow it is going to trickle down to everybody else. That is how you write a bill, which is the Trump tax bill, where 42 percent of the benefit of that bill—it was a \$2 trillion bill—42 percent went to the top 5 percent of Americans, to the people who needed it least.

This is exactly the opposite of that. Sixty percent of our bill—I am not going to give you a lot of numbers, but 60 percent of our bill, the majority of our bill, goes to people making \$50,000 or less. And as my colleagues have said, we are cutting childhood poverty in half this year as a result of what we are doing, and 90 percent of American children are going to benefit from what we are doing. That is about as broad-based as you can get. It is progressive in the sense that the greatest benefit is going to the poorest kids because the credit means the most to the people making the least, but if you are making up to \$150,000 as a couple, you are going to have a benefit for your kids. You will get the full tax credit for your kids.

So let me describe it a little bit, and then I will talk about the earned income tax credit, and then I am going to take over for the Presiding Officer, and I look forward to hearing what he has to say.

Most families under this change to the law are going to receive \$250 a month per child. That is \$300 a month for kids under the age of 6. It is fully refundable. What does that mean? Well, there was a view about this tax credit before that said that you had to make a certain amount of money before you could be eligible for the tax credit because there was a theory that, you know, if you got the tax credit, you wouldn't work.

That is not the problem. People are killing themselves. They are not getting paid. And so we say that you get the tax credit from dollar zero, which means, finally, millions of America's poorest children who have been completely overlooked—not just overlooked, ignored—are going to get the tax credit. So millions and millions and millions of children who were too poor to benefit from what was going on here while we were cutting taxes for the richest people in America are now going to benefit from this tax credit, and it will make the biggest difference for them.

We are the wealthiest country in human history, and yet we have one of the largest, if not the largest, childhood poverty rates in America. As my colleague from New Jersey, Senator BOOKER, said—I lost my train of thought—wait until I get it back. I am so excited about what we are doing, I can't believe it.

As Senator BOOKER said, the largest group of poor people in America are children. In other words, children have the highest percentage poverty rates in our country. How can that be? How can we accept that as a permanent state of things? Well, we are not. Because of Joe Biden's bill, we are cutting it in half. And we are saying, in the richest country in the world, it is unacceptable for us to have one of the highest poverty rates. Other countries have cut their poverty rates by half, why can't we? Well, today we are.

We also have some of the worst economic mobility rates in the industrialized world as well, meaning it is hard to move up on the economic ladder. We used to say we are the land of opportunity. Unfortunately, there are a lot of other countries where people are able to get ahead by working hard. We want that to be our country again, and we want to give poor children a chance here. There is not a single child who chooses to be born poor.

The Senator from New Jersey quoted James Baldwin. He is one of my favorite authors, too, about how expensive it is to be poor.

The other thing that we have done in America is we have made it incredibly hard to be poor, incredibly hard to be poor. And that is one of the interesting things about this bill. In countries that have child benefits like this child benefit, they actually have a higher percentage of people in the workforce than we do. And why is that? It makes total sense. It makes total sense because if you have got a little bit of breathing room at the end of every month, you can fix a car that breaks down, and you can stay on your job. If you can afford to pay for a little bit of childcare for a few hours in the afternoon, maybe that lets you stay on the job.

For working moms in particular, I think it is going to really create the opportunity for them to earn income over the long haul because it will be easier for them to stay in their jobs than not.

As I mentioned, nationwide over 90 percent of children are going to benefit. So, over many nights, late nights often, on this floor, I have come here with one complaint or another about how we have turned our back on America's children. I have come here and I have said over and over again that we are treating America's children like they are someone else's children, not like they are America's children. And you know what? In this bill, we treated America's children like they are America's children, like they really matter to us, like we believe in their future and the future of our country; that they are filled with promise. No matter how poor they are, no matter what ZIP Code they live in, rural or urban, they matter to us. They are visible to us, and we are going to make them a priority.

This is the biggest reduction in childhood poverty in the history of our country, and we need to make it permanent. Today, 40 of us sent a letter to President Biden saying that we are going to work with him to find a way to make this permanent.

My goal is to end childhood poverty in this country. That is where I really want to be because then I will know we really are not going to hold some child's economic circumstances against them, but we are going to give every child in America the chance to run the footrace with each other. But 50 percent is pretty good. It is the best thing we have seen out of Washington in generations.

I want to just mention a few words also about the other bill that Senator BROWN led on the earned income tax credit, which triples that credit for low-income workers who don't have kids. So these are workers who don't have kids, who won't benefit from what we are doing in the child tax credit but will benefit from what we are doing on the earned income tax credit.

Believe it or not, until now, until we passed this bill, Washington, DC, was actually taxing people into poverty. In other words, people were working; they were earning a living; and then they had to pay their taxes. And then they were in poverty because we were tripling the tax credit from about \$500 to \$1,500. That no longer will be true.

We also bring the minimum age down from 25 down to 17, and we lift the cap for seniors so more people can benefit from this tax credit. In fact, 17 million people in this country are going to benefit from this change. There are 300,000 workers in my home State of Colorado. And these changes are going to transform lives. They are going to give folks a chance to breathe.

Just like all of you, I want an economy that when the economy grows, it grows for everybody. It doesn't grow just for the people at the very top. That is the economy we have had for the last 50 years. Such an economy is a threat to democracy. You cannot have a democracy if you don't have an economy where everybody feels like they

get ahead. It won't work. It has never worked in human history, and I think it would be unreasonable for us to expect it would work here.

It has created a lot of uncertainty and, in many places, a lot of anger about whether the American Dream still exists for most Americans. I believe we will be able to dream again here, and we are going to need, as I said, an economy that works for everybody. That means investing in our infrastructure. That means having an approach, you know, to the competition from the Chinese Government that doesn't just leave us and our industries as collateral damage but creates thriving supply chains here, high-paying jobs here, and making sure that we own auto manufacturing here and other kind of manufacturing.

It means having an education system that can prepare people to do the jobs of the 21st century. That is work we still have to do. It means making sure that every single high school kid or every single kid that graduates from high school graduates knowing they can earn not just a minimum wage but a living wage the day they walk out of their high school. That is what we need to do.

But, in the meantime, this tax cut for working people and for low-income people means that people are going to be able to put food on the table, save a little bit of money, get through this pandemic, make their lives a little bit better, and give their kids a little bit more hope.

I am really grateful. I am really grateful that we elected a President and a Vice President who is not treating America's children like they are someone else's children but treating them like they are our children. That is not only the right thing to do for them. That is the essential thing to do if this democracy is going to survive.

I want to thank the Presiding Officer for all his efforts on this bill as well since you joined the Senate. I am going to stop there, and I will come replace you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues—Senator BROWN; Senator BOOKER; the Presiding Officer, Senator BENNET—in shining a bright spotlight on the tragedy of child poverty and what the Senate needs to do and can do to eliminate poverty permanently—child poverty across our country.

Someone has said that children are the casualties of every age, and while this is a longstanding problem, the fight could not be more urgent as countless families work to pull themselves out of the economic misery caused by a once-in-a-century pandemic. This pain is felt all across our country.

But as we talk about the issue of child poverty, this is not theoretical. For me, it is personal. I grew up in pub-

lic housing. I am one of 12 children in my family. I am No. 11 and the first college graduate. I stand here today as a U.S. Senator, but I am the product of good Federal public policy and good public schools. I know that what we do in this Chamber makes a difference in the lives of families and in the lives of all of our children. My life's journey is a testament to the promise of our country, the greatest country on Earth, when we make the necessary investments in our youth and enable them to thrive.

As a pastor, I speak to young people all the time, and I often go back to my hometown of Savannah, GA, and communities all across Georgia like the neighborhood I grew up in. In my efforts to inspire children who are struggling, I tell them that your parent's income does not have to determine your outcome. It is not where you start; it is where you end up.

Now, that is what I say to them, and I believe it, because they need to be inspired to give it all that they have got. But the truth is, when I tell them that their parent's income does not determine their outcome, that is not based simply on what they do, but on what we do. That has to be made real through good public policy.

That is why I am so proud to work with my Senate colleagues and I was so happy to join this U.S. Senate at such a critical time in our country, and in a moment, when we, buoyed by the people of Georgia who made a historic choice, our majority enabled us to pass the American Rescue Plan.

Over the past year, we have seen how the consequences of COVID-19 and the economic downturn that followed it have both illuminated and exacerbated so many of the longstanding disparities that have challenged Georgians, Americans, and people everywhere. We know that low-income families and children, especially, have not only not been spared but have, in many ways, suffered more than most. Children are casualties at every age.

According to data from the Center for American Progress, we know that nearly one in five children in Georgia was living in poverty last year. Think about that: nearly one in five children in poverty in the middle of a pandemic. It is tough enough to live in poverty, but it is even tougher to live in poverty in the middle of a pandemic. What could be tougher than being a child in poverty in a pandemic?

Another 217,000 of those children live in what we could call extreme poverty in the United States—stock markets soaring and children struggling and no relationship between what is happening on Wall Street and what is happening on their streets. It is our job to make it true when I say to them that their parent's income need not determine their outcome.

I don't know about anyone else, but I think that these high rates of child poverty are unacceptable in the greatest, richest country on the planet.

Often, we tell our children to stay on the right road, to stay out of trouble, and we should—stay focused—but we ought to spread that net of responsibility.

The truth is, poverty is its own violence. Poverty is a violence that traumatizes the mind, oppresses the body, and bruises the human spirit, so that is why the American Rescue Plan is so necessary, so important, and so historic. I am glad that Senators BOOKER, BROWN, and BENNET—I feel a little left out, the odd guy out here—I am glad that we were able to push through, in the American Rescue Plan, a landmark expansion of two tax credit programs: the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.

Now, I am calling on all my Senate colleagues to join us in making these expansions permanent. By increasing the child tax credit, thousands of more dollars a year will flow into the pockets of the children and families who need it most, cutting poverty—child poverty—nationwide in half.

In Georgia, more than 1 million families with children will benefit from the increased tax refund, and it will lift more than 171,000 Georgia children out of poverty. Those are my neighbors and yours. Those are kids around my church and who attend my church.

So I want to be clear. Not only were we able to expand the tax refund so that more families are getting more money, but we were able to do so in such a way that it gives families a monthly cash payment providing greater financial security.

This is going to be a gamechanger for so many families, especially those who did not previously qualify for the credit when it was used just to offset taxes already owed to the government. Prior to this expansion, we had folk who were too poor to get our help. There is something wrong about that—too poor to get our help. This expansion corrects that. Now, we are putting dollars directly into the hands of the families who need it the most.

In the COVID package, we were able to strengthen the earned income tax credit, nearly tripling the maximum tax refund allowed for qualifying workers because we have to make sure that childless families in our communities also have the support they need to pay their rent, keep food on the table, and more to keep our communities strong.

Taken together, expanding and extending these programs are a major move toward eliminating child poverty and poverty in general once and for all in Georgia and all across our country, but it is still not enough to truly tackle the issue. We have included this in the American Rescue Plan; now, we must make it permanent. As so often is the case, the right thing to do is also the smart thing to do. This will not only help these families, it will help the American economy.

I am just old enough to remember when they started talking about trickle-down economics. I know some com-

munities where they have been waiting for decades for that trickle. It hadn't trickled down; it is trickling up.

The right thing to do is often the smart thing to do. When we help these families, it is actually good economic policy. Because when you help poor families with children, they buy things like food, baby diapers, a coat for their kid, and it helps the American economy.

The right thing to do is the smart thing to do. If Congress can slash child poverty for 1 year, why wouldn't we or shouldn't we do it once and for all? And so I urge the Senate to stand up and do this work in this moral moment in America.

In just a few days, I will go home. I will stand up, and I will preach on Easter Sunday morning. This year, as it turns out, Easter is on April 4. It is the anniversary of Dr. King's death. So I will be thinking about Dr. King as I preach this coming Easter because Dr. King spent his last birthday, January 15, 1968, in his office, at our church, among other things, planning the Poor People's Campaign, trying to organize us and get us ready to stand up against poverty. He spent his birthday thinking about other people's children because he understood that his children would not be OK until other people's children were OK.

April 4 is his birthday. April 4 is also Easter this year. Let's make these tax credits permanent and resurrect hope and possibility and promise for all of America's children.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL NATIVE PLANT MONTH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 109.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 109) designating April 2021 as "National Native Plant Month".

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 109) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 15, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

REMEMBERING THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS AT BRUSSELS AIRPORT AND THE MAALBEEK METRO STATION IN BELGIUM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 130.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 130) remembering the 5th anniversary of the terrorist attacks at Brussels Airport and the Maalbeek metro station in Belgium and honoring the victims of the terrorist attacks.

There being no objection, committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 130) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 23, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 144, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 144) recognizing the week of March 21 through March 27, 2021, as "National Poison Prevention Week" and encouraging communities across the United States to raise awareness of the dangers of poisoning and promote poison prevention.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 144) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 145, submitted earlier today.